

Message Text

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EXDIS DISTRIBUTE AS NODIS FOR ATHERTON ONLY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, MILI, MOPS, LE, IS, US

SUBJECT: SOUTH LEBANON: NEXT STEPS

REF: A - TEL AVIV 7291, B - TEL AVIV 7289, C - BEIRUT 4760

FOLLOWING IS DRAFT CABLE TO BEIRUT AND TEL AVIV:

1. WE APPRECIATE THE HELPFUL COMMENTS WHICH YOU HAVE
OFFERED AS WE MOVE INTO THE NEXT STAGE OF THE SOUTH
LEBANON SITUATION. FOLLOWING IS BASIC GUIDANCE YOU SHOULD
FOLLOW IN YOUR CONTINUING TALKS WITH HOST GOVERNMENTS.

2. FOR AMBASSADOR LEWIS: WE UNDERSTAND YOU WILL BE SEEING
WEIZMAN AND BEGIN THIS WEEK.

-- YOU SHOULD CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO MOVE FORWARD
PROMPTLY TO TALKS WITH THE LEBANESE UNDER ILMAC. FOR THE
MOMENT, OUR VIEW IS THAT THE ISRAELIS SHOULD BE ABLE TO
RAISE WITH THE LEBANESE ALL ISSUES OF CONCERN TO THEM,
INCLUDING THE GOOD FENCE, THE FATE OF THE CHRISTIAN

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 232524

COMMANDERS, THE HOPE FOR MORE EXTENSIVE WITHDRAWAL OF
PALESTINIANS BEYOND THE LITANI, ETC. YOU SHOULD POINT OUT
TO THE ISRAELIS THAT BOTH IN WASHINGTON AND BEIRUT WE HAVE
TRIED TO CONDITION THE LEBANESE TO EXPECT THE ISRAELIS TO
RAISE ALL CONCEIVABLE ISSUES DEALING WITH SOUTH LEBANON.
THE THRUST OF OUR POSITION HAS BEEN THAT PRAGMATIC

UNDERSTANDINGS SHOULD BE REACHED WITH THE ISRAELIS.

-- WE HOPE THE ISRAELIS WILL SEEK THESE PRAGMATIC UNDERSTANDINGS WITHOUT CROWDING THE LEBANESE SO HARD THAT THEY BECOME APPREHENSIVE. THE LEBANESE EMISSARIES AT THE INITIAL MEETING OR MEETINGS MAY HAVE TO REFER MANY ISRAELI REQUESTS ON SENSITIVE ISSUES TO BEIRUT BEFORE THEY CAN RESPOND. THE LEBANESE ALSO WILL WISH TO CHARACTERIZE SUCH TALKS WITH THE ISRAELIS AS TECHNICAL AND MILITARY IN NATURE, BUT WE ARE CONFIDENT THE ACTUAL SCOPE CAN BE BROADENED.

-- WE STRONGLY SUPPORT THE LEBANESE INSISTENCE THAT THE TALKS BE KEPT SECRET. IT WILL BE MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE LEBANESE TO AGREE TO UNDERSTANDINGS WHICH HELP SATISFY ISRAELI CONCERNS IF THE FACT OF THE TALKS IS MADE PUBLIC.

-- WE HOPE THAT THE TALKS NOT BE PROTRACTED UNNECESSARILY. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE PALESTINIAN PULLBACK OCCURS AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE SO AS TO CONVEY A SENSE OF FORWARD MOVEMENT IN THE SITUATION. THE LEBANESE PARTICULARLY WANT AN UNDERSTANDING WITH THE ISRAELIS ON THE DATES OF THE PALESTINIAN PULLBACK AND THE SIMULTANEOUS INTRODUCTION OF LEBANESE ARMY UNITS INTO THE SOUTH.

-- FOLLOWING UP MY SEPT 26 TALKS WITH DAYAN, YOU SHOULD
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 232524

CONTINUE TO URGE THE ISRAELIS TO BEHAVE WITH THE GREATEST POSSIBLE RESTRAINT AND PATIENCE IF VIOLATIONS OF THE CEASE-FIRE OR OTHER PROVOCATIONS OCCUR.

3. FOR AMBASSADOR PARKER:

-- YOU SHOULD SIMILARLY CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE THE LEBANESE TO HOLD MEETINGS WITH THE ISRAELIS AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. EXPLAIN THAT WE SUPPORT LEBANON'S WISH THAT THESE TALKS REMAIN SECRET AND ARE SAYING SO TO THE ISRAELIS. CONTINUE TO CONDITION THE LEBANESE TO EXPECT THE ISRAELIS TO RAISE ALL KINDS OF ISSUES IN THE TALKS. MAKE CLEAR THAT OUR POSITION REMAINS THAT PRAGMATIC UNDERSTANDINGS SHOULD BE THE OBJECTIVE OF BOTH SIDES.

-- REITERATE THE POINT MADE BY HABIB TO GENERAL KHOURY IN WASHINGTON THAT IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT LEBANESE MILITARY UNITS BE INTRODUCED INTO SOUTH LEBANON AS QUICKLY AS FEASIBLE, AND THAT THE LEBANESE MIGHT WELL HAVE TO TAKE SOME RISKS.

-- CONTINUE TO TAKE THE LINE WITH THE LEBANESE THAT WE

CONSIDER THE CEASE-FIRE AND ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL AS THE

FIRST STEP IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SHTAURA AGREEMENT.
WE WILL CONTINUE TO URGE ISRAEL TO ACQUIESCE IN ITS
IMPLEMENTATION.

4. FOR YOU BOTH:

-- MONITOR DEVELOPMENTS IN THE TALKS AND REPORT IMMEDIATELY
IF AN IMPASSE APPEARS TO BE DEVELOPING, ALONG WITH RECOM-
MENDATIONS FOR OVERCOMING IT.

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